

REMARKS

I. Introduction

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and objections contained in the Office Action of January 29, 2009 is respectfully requested.

By this amendment claims 16, 22, 26, 32, and 37 have been amended, claims 17, 33, and 39 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter contained therein, and claims 40 and 41 have been added. Claims 16, 18-26, 31-32, 34-38, and 40-41 are now pending in the application. No new matter has been added by these amendments.

II. Claim Objections

On page 2 of the Office Action claim 16 is objected to for including a minor typographical error. Claim 16 has been amended to correct this error; withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Also on page 2 of the Office Action, claims 22 and 37 are objected to for a minor informality involving the use of semicolons instead of commas. Claims 22 and 37 have each been amended to remove this language; new claims 40 and 41 include the subject matter removed from claims 22 and 37 but include commas instead of semicolons. Accordingly, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

III. 35 U.S.C. § 112

Beginning on page 2 of the Office Action claims 22 and 37 are rejected as being indefinite for being unclear regarding an alternative expression. The alternative expression has

been removed from each of claims 22 and 37. New claims 40 and 41 include subject matter identical to subject matter previously included in claims 22 and 37, except that commas are used instead of semicolons as discussed above. A telephone interview was conducted on April 28, 2009 in which the Examiner indicated that such an amendment would overcome the indefiniteness rejections and would also not raise issues requiring further search and consideration. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of these rejections.

IV. Prior Art Rejections

On page 12 of the Office Action claims 17, 32, and 33 were objected to as containing allowable subject matter. The subject matter of claim 17 has been written in independent form by incorporating it into claim 16; thus Applicants respectfully submit that allowance of claim 16 is in order. The subject matter of claim 33 has been written in independent form by incorporating it into claim 26; thus Applicants respectfully submit that allowance of claim 26 is in order. Lastly, the subject matter of claim 32 has been written in independent form by incorporating the subject matter previously included in claim 16 into claim 32; thus Applicants respectfully submit that allowance of claim 32 is in order.

Claims 18-25, 31, 34, and 35 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 16 and are thus allowable for at least the reasons set forth above in support of claim 16. Claims 36-38 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 26 and are thus allowable for at least the reasons set forth above in support of claim 26.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, inasmuch as all of the outstanding issues have been addressed, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in complete condition for issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance, and action to such effect is

earnestly solicited.

Should any issues remain after consideration of the within response, however, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the Examiner's convenience. If any fee beyond that submitted herewith, or extension of time is required to obtain entry of this Amendment, the undersigned hereby petitions the Commissioner to grant any necessary time extension and authorizes charging Deposit Account 23-0975 for any such fee not submitted herewith.

Respectfully submitted,

Kazuo YOKOYAMA et al.

By: _____
/Andrew D. St.Clair/
2009.04.29 13:57:19 -04'00'

Andrew D. St.Clair
Registration No. 58,739
Attorney for ApplicantS

ADS/DMO/rgf
Washington, D.C. 20005-1503
Telephone (202) 721-8200
Facsimile (202) 721-8250
April 29, 2009